

and local initiatives like merit pay, teacher testing, tenure reform, and new opportunities for teacher development might be better uses of that money.

So let us give teachers the opportunity to be the best teachers they can be, and let us give America's children the best hope for a bright future.

AMERICA WANTS A CONGRESS THAT WORKS FOR THEM

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, this Republican-led Congress is a Congress of catchy slogans and gimmicks in trying to pass the appropriation bills, gimmicks like trying to create a 13th month for budget purposes, gimmicks like trying to declare everything an emergency, like the 2000 census, even though it has been in the Constitution for over 200 years.

Now their latest gimmick is a button to tell themselves to stop raiding the Social Security Trust Fund. Instead of gimmicks in raiding the Social Security Trust Fund to pay for the emergency spending, American people ask for things that cost very little and would improve their lives, like a patients' bill of rights so they and their doctors can make their medical decisions and not the HMO; like an increase in the minimum wage so everyone can enjoy our strong economy; like 100,000 more teachers so we can have smaller class sizes; and prescription drug coverage for seniors.

Mr. Speaker, let us work for the American people. Unfortunately, under the Republican-led Congress, it is always the same old story. Tax breaks for the rich and a tax on Government. America wants a Congress that works for them, like Democrats are fighting for.

CONGRATULATING CESAR "EDDY" BLASS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this morning I am delighted to congratulate Mr. Cesar "Eddy" Blass, who will celebrate 15 years as president of the American Peruvian Action Committee, APAC-USA.

Eddy has won the attention of his community with his service which has enabled him to contribute to our South Florida community. He is a dedicated, tireless advocate for the plight of the Peruvian Americans in their long-sought goals of residency and eventual U.S. citizenship.

Through his actions, Eddy has become a leader in the fight to unify Pe-

ruvian Americans throughout the United States; and, as a result of his extensive community service, he has received a host of awards, certificates, and recognition.

This Saturday APAC will commemorate its 15th anniversary and honor its president and founder, Cesar "Eddy" Blass. He has been an inspiration to the lives of his fellow countrymen, as well as for our entire South Florida community.

In honor of his 15th anniversary as president of the American Peruvian Action Committee, I ask my colleagues to join me today in paying tribute to Cesar "Eddy" Blass.

AMERICANS DESERVE TO HAVE ISSUES THEY CARE ABOUT MOST ADDRESSED

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this Republican Congress is failing American families.

The gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT) originally promised that the Republican-controlled Congress would finish work on the budget nearly 2 months ago. Yet, they continue to sit here and waste our time with political stunts.

The American people have become used to a Republican Congress that is no longer just a "do nothing" Congress, but a "do the wrong thing" Congress.

Americans deserve a budget; they deserve to have the issues they care about most addressed. There is positive legislation that our constituents are asking us to bring to the House floor. We could be saving Social Security, building new schools, reducing classroom size. We could be increasing the minimum wage so that workers can provide for their families. We could be ensuring patients' rights and putting the care back into health care. Instead, we are mired down in partisan rhetoric and debate.

Mr. Speaker, the people of southeast Texas and I have been waiting for over 5 weeks for the Republicans to finish the budget, but we cannot wait much longer. They need to quit stalling and together let us get the people's business done.

EDUCATION SPENDING BILL

(Mr. SCHAFFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, there are few issues in America more important than education. And in fact, the White House and Congress really do not disagree on the amount of money that we ought to spend on schools in this year's appropriations process. But

what is holding up the debate is the question of how to spend those dollars.

The Republican party clearly believes that governors and State legislators, school board members, and principals and superintendents ought to be free to spend the dollars that we are appropriating as they see fit. But the President has a different idea. He wants to tell States specifically how they must spend the money.

In some States, hiring more teachers makes sense. In other States, it might not. But here is the President's answer to the question put by a reporter: "Mr. President, on the issue of funding for teachers, sir, you resent it when Congress tells you to spend money in ways which you do not deem appropriate. Why should a state governor who would like to spend that money differently feel any differently?"

The President's answer: "Well, because it's not their money."

When you have an attitude like that in Washington that the taxpayers' money belongs to Washington and not the taxpayers, it explains how the White House is willing to squander the American tax dollars in a way that neglects children and abandons our schools.

SAY YES TO AGENDA FOR AMERICAN FAMILIES

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, in response to the previous speaker, I sat yesterday with the superintendent of schools in the city of Portland and members of the school committee in Portland, Maine; and they do not want block grants. They want class size reduction above all else.

Mr. Speaker, this session is winding down and the Republican Congress has a sorry record. We have not done very much this session, and much of what we have done has been done wrong.

Many Democrats worked hard to pass campaign finance reform with the help of some Republicans here, but the leadership has killed it. Democrats tried to make our schools safer by passing modest gun safety laws, but Republicans said no. Democrats have worked to make health care safer for patients by passing a patients' bill of rights, but Republicans said no.

Democrats in this administration tried to make the world safer by ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Republicans said no. Democrats have been working hard to get prescription drug legislation passed, but Republicans in the Committee on Ways and Means the other day said no.

Next year let us say yes to an agenda for American families. Let us say yes and get this agenda enacted.